

4.3 (Twice Amended) The method according to claim 10, further comprising monitoring safety supplements during at least a confidence interval of locating individual vehicles, data-transmission and data-acknowledgement.

5.4 (Twice Amended) The method according to claim 10, wherein the virtual coupling of the vehicles is canceled and the devices along the route communicate with individual vehicles.

5.5 (Twice Amended) The method according to claim 5, wherein the vehicles communicating with the devices along the route inform the devices about which vehicles are coupled to one another, and the devices along the route request at least separate location messages from the vehicles behind one another for the route sections along being traveled in response to cancellation of the virtual coupling.

432 5.6 (Twice Amended) The method according to claim 5, wherein after cancellation of the virtual coupling, the vehicles report to the devices along the route and output at least separate location messages for the route sections being traveled.

8.7 (Twice Amended) The method according to claim 10, wherein the virtual coupling of the vehicles is performed or canceled by the vehicles.

Please add the following new claim.

10.1 (New) A method for reducing data traffic between track-bound vehicles traveling along a route and devices along the route, comprising:

pb3  
registering a vehicle request to be allowed to travel along the route;  
assigning permission to the vehicles to travel along the route according to predefined rules, where each of the vehicles determine a respective location on the route; and  
monitoring train integrity within each of the vehicles and transmitting messages to one of the vehicles selected to communicate with the devices along the route,  
wherein the vehicles traveling on the route are moved within braking distance of one another such that the vehicles are virtually coupled.

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the virtually coupled vehicles move together under independent operation <sup>performed by</sup> using a vehicle-mounted distance-maintaining system, and

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*cont'd*  
the devices along the route communicate with the virtually coupled vehicles, such that a front of the virtually coupled vehicles is determined by a front most vehicle and a rear of the virtually coupled vehicles is determined by a rear most vehicle.

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